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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
CALIFORNIA

MESSAGES FROM ABROAD

FROM AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

DIVISION OF CONSTRUCTION AND FORESTRY

FRANCE, *July 16, 1918.*

"The forestry section is plugging straight ahead, with the determination to see to it that the winning of the war shall not be held back by the lack of timber, which the Army needs both for offensive

Through French forests into No Man's Land—Americans advancing with sacks of hand grenades.

operations at the front and for the services of supply and communication in the rear. We are now cutting something like a million feet a day—sawed, hewn, and round, not counting fuel wood—but we have not yet caught up with the demands of the Army. If you spent a week in my office, you would think that this is a lumber war from the way the requisitions pour in. We are producing everything from 100-foot piles for the docks at our base ports to 18-inch slats for the "duck boards," or board walks, in the bottoms of the trenches. Estimates for wire entanglement stakes come in in units of millions. The largest demands, however, are for barrack and warehouse lumber and railroad ties. We are also sending a lot of heavy timbers to the front for bridge construction and bomb proofs, and planking for the artillery roads. We are going to plank a road for the American Army, if need be, to the River Rhine, and then build a bridge across it.

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"'Can you tell me, Davis, why you have so many forest fires in your country?' asked the Kaiser."
A forest in California killed by fire.

"We are making the American mills do some tricks which I doubt their ever having done before. Most of our 10,000-foot mills are cutting better than 25,000 feet in two shifts, and some have been working three shifts. One of them was pulled up the other day, moved 18 miles, and began cutting its first log at the new set 47 hours after the last log was cut at the old set."

EXTRACT FROM ARTHUR N. DAVIS'S ACCOUNT OF "THE KAISER AS I KNEW HIM FOR FOURTEEN YEARS"

[Appearing in the San Francisco Chronicle of Aug. 10, 1918.]

"Can you tell me, Davis, why you have so many forest fires in your country?" he (the Kaiser) asked, after a particularly destructive conflagration in the West had destroyed many acres of timber. "How does it happen?"

I explained to him that most of the forest fires came from sparks from locomotives.[1] Careless lumbermen allow the branches which they lopped off the trees to remain on the ground, and when they were ignited by sparks the fire sometimes spread to the uncut timber.

"That points out again the inefficiency of your form of government," he commented. "You have laws requiring the railways to use appliances to arrest the sparks from their engines, haven't you? Why don't you enforce them? Your people don't seem to realize that it takes years to grow a tree. Because you have more than you need to-day, you make no provision for to-morrow. For every tree cut down, another should be planted. If you don't adopt some such

[1] Not true for California. During 1918, for instance, locomotives started less than 2 per cent of the 1,148 forest fires in the National Forests of the State.

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View of a French forest killed by German gun fire.

measure, the time will surely come when America will have to turn to Germany for timber."

POST CARD FROM COMPANY F, 10th ENGINEERS, A. E. F.

FRANCE, *June 15, 1918.*

"Our cut to-day, June 15, in 9 hours and 45 minutes, is 49,800 feet b. m., or 29,800 feet over capacity, 149 per cent overrun. Some cutting! We are so far ahead of all other outfits that to overcut them has ceased to be a sport. It is just a matter of course."

FROM A LUMBERMAN WITH THE "LUMBERJACK" REGIMENT

FRANCE, *September 5, 1918.*

"It is generally believed in America that the timber resources of France are of little, if any, account. As a matter of fact, France is quite rich in this respect. According to French records, there is available 174,000,000,000 feet of standing timber and the French claim that it is increasing by growth 1,500,000,000 feet per annum. While much of the timber is small, yet there can be found in certain sections of France timber that will compare favorably with some of the larger varieties in America. Some of our operations are sawing on logs that will run from three to five to the thousand feet. In carrying on our operations we are adhering to the rules and customs followed by the French in connection with their system of forest conservation, which at first seemed strange to us, but after we became accustomed to it, we found that it is not only practicable, but very necessary as well."

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"The forestry section is plugging straight ahead . . . "—Camp of Tenth Engineers (Forest) in France.

FROM THE "LUMBERJACK" REGIMENT," A. E. F.

FRANCE, *June 15, 1918.*

"I am holding up the job of Fire Warden in the woods now, and I expect to be kept pretty busy, as these woods are bad fire traps. The trees have all been boxed and the ground is covered with turpentine shavings; then there is a thick growth of dead grass, and brush which burns worse than the grass.

"About 30 of us went to a big fire which broke out in some French timber near here last Sunday. I thought that I might pick up some new ideas in fire fighting from the French, but was sadly disappointed. There was a bunch of old men, women, and boys on the job, without a shovel or an ax in the outfit, and they had never heard of back-firing before. They were strong on the wine, though, and we fixed it so they did not have to carry so much.

"The fire burned over about 100 acres and would have burned much more if we had not been on the job."

EXTRACT FROM LETTER FROM LIEUT. GIMBAL

[Published in Sacramento Bee, Nov. 30, 1918.]

"It is indeed a pretty sentiment—this love of France for her trees. It is not gushing nor foolish; it is sincere and noble. And, believe me, where it is not voluntary it is enforced. The Frenchman naturally obeys the law. But where there is a disposition not to obey, he sees quickly that the miscreant is made to understand. That is the way in the forests.

"Certain trees are designated to be cut when necessity demands it, but talk as you will, you can not take what you will."

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